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ABSTRACT

This booklet lists the names and addresses of units serving the blind and partially sighted in the state of Illinois and gives a brief description of each unit. The services provided are listed under the following categories: Services for the Aged, Services for Parents of the Visually Impaired, Educational Services for Visually Handicapped Children, The Public School and the Visually Handicapped Child, Program Assistance, Schools for Visually Impaired, College-Vocational Counseling and Assistance, For Veterans, Home Counseling Service, Library Services. (CK)

state of illinois services for the blind and visually impaired

VISUAL IMPAIRMENT
COUNSELING
EDUCATION
REHABILITATION
ADULT PROGRAMS
LIBRARY SERVICES

Office of the
Superintendent of
Public Instruction
State of Illinois
Michael J. Bakalis
Superintendent

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
OFFICE OF EDUCATION

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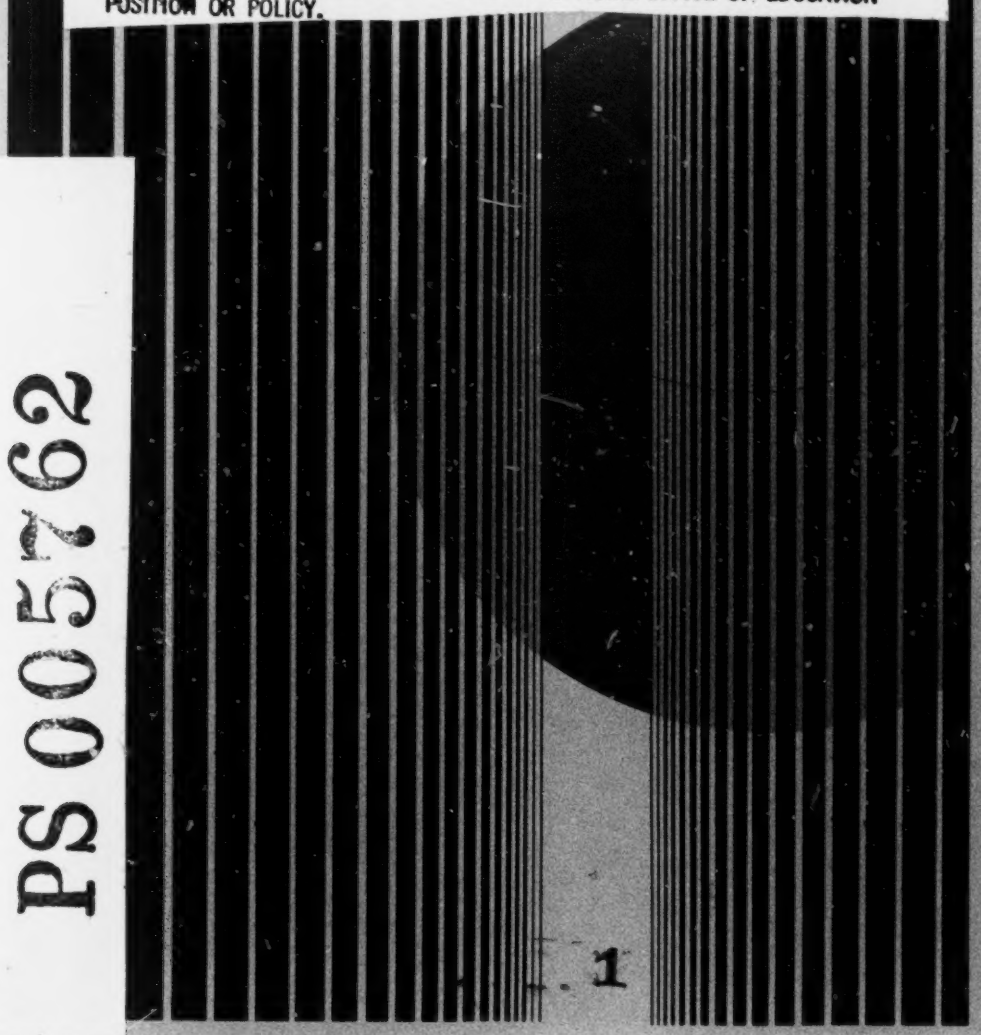

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State of Illinois Services
For the Blind and Visually Impaired

Visual Impairments — **Counseling**

Education — **Rehabilitation**

Adult Programs — **Library Services**

Prepared by a subcommittee of the Illinois Committee on Comprehensive Services to the Visually Handicapped to assist the visually handicapped of Illinois locate and utilize services which their tax dollars support.

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CHALLENGE

What if I have eyes that do not see

This gaily colored world of forms and show;

What if in the dark I always go,

My footsteps led by sounds and memory.

What if Autumn never dressed a tree

In golden brown for me to love and know;

What if the sunset always hides its glow;

And morning's dawn does not unveil to me;

My father gave me strength of soul and mind;

My mother taught me how to laugh and pray;

My ears and nose and fingers are designed

To bring me knowledge, beauty, work and play.

I need not envy those who see the light;

I know my way and have no fear of night.

--Raymond M. Dickinson*
Former Coordinator of
Services for the Visually
Handicapped, Department of
Children and Family Services

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* Blind since the age of 20, Mr. Dickinson was employed by the State of Illinois for more than 40 years, during which time he was instrumental in the development of many Illinois programs designed to serve the unique needs of the visually impaired.

FOREWORD

This booklet was designed to familiarize you with various Illinois agencies serving the blind and the visually handicapped.

Tax funds support a variety of such agencies, which combine to represent one of the nation's most comprehensive service programs for the visually handicapped. However, the effectiveness of these agencies is restricted if those whom they are intended to serve are unaware of their existence.

This booklet lists the names and addresses of units serving the blind and partially sighted, as well as a brief description of each.

It is hoped that this information will assist in the location and utilization of Illinois resources existing to aid the visually handicapped achieve greater harmony with the everyday world.

Michael J. Bakalis
Superintendent of Public Instruction

DISCOVERING VISUAL HANDICAPS

Vision Section
Illinois Department of Public Health
535 West Jefferson Street
Springfield, Illinois 62706

The Vision Section of the Illinois Department of Public Health administers programs for prevention and detection of visual impairments and improvements of use of vision.

Detection and treatment are the primary objectives of vision screening programs for preschool and school-age children and glaucoma examinations for adults.

Aged adults are encouraged to have periodic glaucoma examinations, which can determine the level of visual acuity, as well as the cause of the individual's optical disability.

Vision screening reveals only the child's visual acuity. Screening cannot be used as a tool for diagnosing visual impairments. Vision screening can, however, serve to efficiently single out youngsters who appear to need more elaborate professional examinations and possibly treatment.

Visual impairments and blindness can lead to educational, vocational, and social problems. Prompt diagnosis and treatment of impairments, on the other hand, can assist the individual in successfully adjusting to the restrictions of his disability. Therefore, parents of children with low acuity, as identified through vision screening, should seek and follow professional advice.

Professional advice may come from either of two types of eye specialists. These are:

(1) The ophthalmologist -- a medical doctor specializing in diseases and defects of the eye. He can perform surgery or prescribe treatment.

(2)The optometrist -- a specialist trained to examine the eye for muscular defects. He can recommend exercises and fit corrective lenses.

The Vision Section of the Illinois Department of Public Health lists the following symptoms which may indicate defective vision:

-- Unusual sensitivity to light.

-- Blurred vision.

-- Apparent lack of eye coordination.

-- Dizziness, frequent or rapid blinking.

-- Excessive rubbing or pressing on the eye.

-- Crusty or swollen lids.

-- Tilting the head and squinting or otherwise contorting the face in examining objects.

-- Holding of reading material too near or too far from the face.

-- Frequent stumbling or bumping into objects.

-- Difficulty in negotiating stairs.

No single symptom is conclusive evidence of faulty vision, but none should be ignored. Eye tests should become a part of a regular physical examination program.

Illinois residents who are blind or severely visually imparied should register with the Vision Coordinator of the Illinois Department of Public Health, who in turn will assist them in locating programs designed to meet their individual needs.

SERVICES FOR THE AGED

Illinois Department of Public Aid
203 New State Office Building
Springfield, Illinois 62706

Community Services for the Visually Handicapped
Room 1700
State of Illinois Building
160 North LaSalle Street
Chicago, Illinois 60601

Among the State of Illinois services to the aged visually impaired are aid in learning to manage the home, maintain social contracts, develop new hobbies, use library services, and secure financial assistance.

Special information and counseling for the blind and visually impaired are available through Community Services for the Visually Handicapped. This agency disseminates information concerning sheltered care homes specially designed for the blind or visually handicapped and institutions offering living quarters or nursing care.

Medical assistance is available through the Department of Public Aid, though assistance must be requested prior to treatment. Additional advice and information concerning eligibility for financial aid, including medical assistance, is available through the local County Department of Public Aid or the State Department offices at Springfield.

SERVICES FOR PARENTS OF THE VISUALLY IMPAIRED

Illinois Department of Children and Family Services
524 South Second Street
Springfield, Illinois 62706

Through its regional and district offices, the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services offers counseling by trained social workers and rehabilitation teachers to the parents of visually handicapped children. Additional information concerning the location of regional and district offices and the rehabilitation counseling services offered through them is available from the director at the State Department offices at Springfield.

Parents of the Blind
6024 South Troy Street
Chicago, Illinois 60629

The parents of Illinois visually handicapped children have organized Parents of the Blind to enable members to discuss common problems and develop and test possible solutions. Additional information is available by writing the main office of the statewide organization.

EDUCATIONAL SERVICES FOR VISUALLY HANDICAPPED CHILDREN

Community Services for the Visually Handicapped
Room 1700
State of Illinois Building
160 North LaSalle Street
Chicago, Illinois 60093

Illinois Department of Children and Family Services
524 South Second Street
Springfield, Illinois 62706

State Consultant
For Blind and Partially Seeing and Instructional Materials Center
Services for Visually Handicapped

Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction
1020 South Spring Street
Springfield, Illinois 62706

Experts in the field of preschool education have warned parents not to leave their children alone in playpens entertaining themselves for hours. The child needs interaction with adults if he is to develop to his fullest potential.

Information concerning materials designed to assist parents in occupying the interest of their visually handicapped child, while at the same time aiding him to develop skills comparable to those of other children his age, is available through four State agencies.

For information, write the Instructional Materials Center; the state consultant for the blind and partially seeing; the superintendent of Community Services for the Visually Handicapped, or the director of the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services. Additional assistance and information may also be available from the superintendent of the local school district.

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THE PUBLIC SCHOOL AND THE VISUALLY HANDICAPPED CHILD

Illinois law requires that each school district provide educational services for physically handicapped children -- including the blind and visually impaired -- from the time they are three years of age.

State funds are available to school districts for employment of readers for visually impaired students, for Braillists and typists to prepare materials, and for covering the cost of additional aids. These funds are distributed to local districts whose programs have been approved by the state consultant for the blind and partially seeing, Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction.

In addition, Braille and large type books, tape recordings, tangible aids, and specially adapted materials used in the education of the visually handicapped child are available to local schools through the director, Instructional Materials Center, Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction.

The visually impaired preschool child may take advantage of the preschool program provided by his local school district or he may attend a local nursery school.

Parents of a visually impaired kindergarten-age child are encouraged to enroll their child in the regular kindergarten program offered by the local school district.

A variety of programs are offered for visually impaired students in grades 1-12.

Many students attend regular classes, but are given extra, individualized instruction by specially trained teachers in resource rooms. Others receive periodic counseling and instruction from an itinerant special teacher.

Often, entire classes are made up of visually handicapped students and are conducted in specially designed classrooms. In general, however, the visually impaired student will use large type textbooks and other special equipment to enable him to remain exclusively in the regular classroom.

PROGRAM ASSISTANCE

State Consultant
For Blind and Seeing
Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction
1020 South Spring Street
Springfield, Illinois 62706

Guidance and assistance in developing and improving local academic programs for the visually handicapped are available through the state consultant for the blind and partially seeing, Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction.

SCHOOLS FOR VISUALLY IMPAIRED

Illinois Braille and Sight Saving School
658 East State Street
Jacksonville, Illinois 62650

This resident facility is operated by the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services to serve visually impaired children who are educable, but due to other disabling factors or problems cannot participate in regular school programs. Preschool through high school study programs are offered at the institution, which has no tuition or charge for room, board, and ordinary medical care. Only Illinois residents are allowed to attend the school.

Illinois Visually Handicapped Institute (IVHI)
1151 South Wood Street
Chicago, Illinois 60612

IVHI provides intensive training in a group residential setting to aid visually impaired adults learn to cope with their handicap and prepare themselves for employment through vocational training.

Emphasis is placed on development of such skills as mobility, typewriting, Braille reading and writing, and daily living activities. The summer session is primarily for junior and senior high school age students and is devoted to instruction in independent travel and everyday living activities.

The Institute works closely with other agencies to improve job training programs and placement opportunities. Additional information is available through the superintendent of the Institute.

Chicago Lighthouse for the Blind
1850 West Roosevelt Road
Chicago, Illinois 60608

The Lighthouse offers assistance in development of personal skills and trains the blind to utilize employment opportunities.

Through vocational training programs, the visually impaired can learn dictaphone typing and how to use medical terminology. They also receive small business training and on-the-job experience in an industrial workshop.

A special program prepares young, visually impaired adults for college, while other programs offer counseling and instruction for preschool blind children and their parents, and blind, mentally retarded young adults.

The severely visually handicapped receive special lenses and other low vision aids to enable them to use existing vision to its fullest. In conjunction with training programs, Lighthouse clients are encouraged to develop leisure-time interests by participating in recreation programs.

For further information, write the executive director of the Lighthouse.

Handley School for the Blind
700 Elm Street
Winnetka, Illinois 60093

Correspondence courses covering all academic areas and levels are offered through Handley School. For additional information, write the school's superintendent.

COLLEGE - VOCATIONAL COUNSELING AND ASSISTANCE

Illinois Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR)
623 East Adams Street
Springfield, Illinois 62706

Counseling services and some financial assistance for visually handicapped persons interested in continuing their education on the college level are available through DVR.

DVR also provides trained counselors to assist the blind and partially sighted in selecting, preparing for and finding suitable employment and furnishes specialized occupational tools and equipment.

Area vocational rehabilitation counselors are located throughout the State. Specific information concerning these programs and the addresses of counseling offices nearest you may be obtained by writing the chief of Services for the Blind and Visually Handicapped.

FOR VETERANS

Midwest Center for Blind and Visually Impaired Veterans
Veterans Administration Hospital
Hines, Illinois 60141

The Veterans Administration offers counseling services and some financial assistance for visually handicapped veterans interested in continuing their education.

Specialized rehabilitation programs are open to all blind or visually impaired veterans, regardless of whether their disability was service or nonservice incurred.

Programs include instruction in independent travel, manual skills, and communications, including Braille reading and writing, as well as instruction in the use of low vision aids. Among the administration services are counseling, social programs and physical reconditioning and recreation. Modified programs are available for veterans whose blindness or visual impairment is compounded by chronic illness or old age.

The regular training program is generally limited to 18-20 weeks, during which the veterans reside at the VA Center at Hines. For additional information, contact the chief of the Hines Center.

HOME COUNSELING SERVICE

Community Services for the Visually Handicapped
Illinois Department of Children and Family Services
Room 1700
State of Illinois Building
160 North LaSalle Street
Chicago, Illinois 60601

Counseling and instruction services for the visually impaired regardless of their financial status or employability, and those with whom they have personal contact are offered by the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services.

Instruction is offered in Braille reading and writing and the use of typewriter, tape recorder and Talking Book Machine. (Community Services for the Visually Handicapped loans government-owned Talking Book Machines free of charge to persons who are unable to read for themselves.)

Additional instruction is designed to aid the visually handicapped individual improve his mobility, handwriting, telephone and homemaking skills, and acquiring needed tools and materials for the visually impaired.

Counseling and instruction are available at home or in group sessions. For information, write the superintendent, Community Services for the Visually Handicapped.

LIBRARY SERVICES

Chicago Public Library
Books for the Blind and Physically Handicapped
4544 North Lincoln Avenue
Chicago, Illinois 60625

Community Services for the Visually Handicapped
Illinois Department of Children and Family Services
Room 1700
State of Illinois Building
160 North LaSalle Street
Chicago, Illinois 60601

All visually impaired Illinois residents are eligible for the Books for the Blind and Physically Handicapped services of the Chicago Public Library. Certification is not required to establish eligibility for use of Braille materials, but verification of visual impairments is required for borrowers of Talking Books and magnetic tapes.

The library loans Braille and large type books, Talking Book records and magnetic tapes and makes available catalogs and listings of materials available to blind and visually impaired persons throughout the State.

Books for the Blind include classics, current best sellers, popular westerns, mystery stories, and nonfiction. A variety of magazines also are available in Braille and on Talking Books and tapes.

Persons interested in borrowing Talking Books or tapes should first request Talking Book Machines and tape players from Community Services for the Visually Handicapped, which supplies and maintains equipment at no charge to the borrower. Community Services also offers free training in the use of mechanical equipment.

All library materials and playing equipment are sent in special postage-free cartons to borrowers. Materials and equipment must be returned in the same cartons to insure postage-free return. The reverse side of mailing labels is preaddressed for easy return. Additional information is available through the library and the Community Services for the Visually Handicapped.

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